
New South China Sea Frontline: Science Journals

Manipulating public opinion about the nine-dash line figure and enforcing it on the ground does no help in legitimizing China's controversial claims. Yet, it is a type of information warfare which would have more complicated and long-lasting in China's own perception and international public opinion.

Since around 2007, China has reinforced its maritime territorial claims in the South China Sea (SCS) and pursued a comprehensive strategy to step by step expand its presence and effective control over disputed territories. A range of diplomatic, administrative, economic and military tactics have been employed. China has not only attempted to change facts on the ground but also sought to gradually change the world's mind regarding its unlawful claims.

This perception battle is intense in the South China Sea, yet it has not received adequate attention it deserves. In fact, carrying out this kind of warfare is in line with China's strategic culture, which emphasizes the ideal of "winning without fighting" of Sun Tzu, the author of *The Art of War*, or winning the war with minimum use of force. Such approach helps China to not spark an armed conflict prematurely, thus not needing to waste any naval assets.